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## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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Soviet Views on the "European Defense" Movement**Summary**

Soviet media attacks on last month's meeting of Western European Union (WEU) foreign and defense ministers reflect Moscow's increasing anxiety over efforts by Western European countries to step up cooperation on security policies. Moscow's concerns center on the possibility that West Germany might exploit growing West European interest in cooperative defense arrangements as a means of gaining greater influence over the defense policy decisions of its West European allies. Moscow also appears to be anxious about the longer term threat that the Federal Republic could play an increasingly assertive role--and possibly gain access to nuclear weapons--within a European security arrangement separate from NATO. Although some Soviet spokesmen appear to hope that the trend toward Western European "self-assertiveness" will eventually work to Soviet advantage, Moscow has evidently concluded that, at present, the costs to Soviet interest outweigh the gains. The Soviets are likely to continue to exert pressure on Bonn and its allies in hopes of circumscribing the further development of the movement or of diverting it away from US policy goals.

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### Western European Assertiveness

Sentiment for increasing Western Europe's role in the Western Alliance has grown markedly over the past few years, especially in France and West Germany. The trend has been fueled in part by Western European differences with Washington over political and economic strategy toward the Soviet Union and by the domestic political fallout from last year's INF debate. The Western European Allies have been increasingly interested in coordinating their defense policies, in order to be more assertive in the NATO alliance, and in encouraging joint production of arms and equipment, primarily to boost their economies. West German leaders in particular, while insisting that nothing should be done to undermine NATO solidarity, have made it known that they believe the time is right for closer Western European political and security cooperation. [REDACTED]

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This sentiment within Western Europe has led to some revitalization of the WEU, the seven-member organization formed in 1954 to provide a framework for and to monitor postwar restrictions on West German rearmament.<sup>1</sup> Although the WEU has served mostly as a forum for political consultation, its members, led by France, have tried in recent years to make it into an effective mechanism for coordinating their foreign and defense policies. The French have agreed to Bonn's request to lift remaining WEU restrictions on West German conventional armaments production in exchange for West Germany's support for revitalizing the organization. In conjunction with these moves, Paris and Bonn have also stepped up bilateral defense cooperation, most noticeably in the area of joint armaments production. At the annual Franco-German summit last May the two countries reached final agreement on joint production of an antitank helicopter and discussed joint development of a military photoreconnaissance satellite. [REDACTED]

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Progress toward closer defense cooperation was boosted in late October, when the WEU held an unusual joint meeting of defense and foreign ministers in Rome. The ministers issued a declaration endorsing further discussions aimed at harmonizing views on defense questions, arms control, East-West relations, contributions to Alliance defense, and the development of

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<sup>1</sup>The members of the WEU are France, Great Britain, West Germany, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

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[redacted]

armaments cooperation in Western Europe. The ministers also approved institutional reforms and agreed to hold regular meetings twice a year. [redacted]

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### Soviet Criticism

The USSR typically has been critical of any proposals for enlarging or restructuring the Western European role in Western defense plans, whether within or outside NATO. Soviet media, for example, criticized former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's plan last winter for restructuring NATO. The plan included proposals to name a European to the post of Supreme Allied Commander Europe (and an American to the post of NATO Secretary General), give Europe major responsibility for conventional ground defense, and "Europeanize" Western delegations to arms control negotiations involving weapons stationed in Europe. [redacted]

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The developments in the WEU appear to have heightened Moscow's concern. The Soviet media have given increased attention to the issue and during the summer began a full-fledged propaganda campaign against it. Although initial criticism focused on France--a 1982 Soviet journal article said that France wants to turn the WEU into its own "militaristic forum"--Soviet commentary this year has increasingly emphasized the role that West Germany might play in any new or refurbished Western European defense organization. Moscow has charged that Paris and Bonn are seeking to form a military "axis." [redacted]

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The Soviets have also applied diplomatic pressure. When the WEU executive council voted in late June to give Bonn the right to produce long-range offensive weapons, including land-based missiles and aircraft, the Soviet Government delivered a memorandum to the West Germans protesting the decision and made related oral demarches to the other members of the WEU and to the United States. The memorandum, which TASS publicized two days after it was delivered, alleged that the WEU decision would allow West Germany to pose a "threat to the security not only of its neighbors, but also of distant states" and warned Bonn that "negative consequences" would inevitably arise if it produces its own long-range offensive weapons. [redacted]

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Declaring that the WEU decision on German arms production contradicts the 1945 Potsdam Agreement signed by the USSR, UK, France, and the United States, Moscow sought to characterize the problem as a postwar, four-power issue and demanded that the Western powers take responsibility for controlling their ally and preventing a revival of a German threat. The Soviets

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subsequently warned publicly and privately that Moscow would act "independently" if the Western powers did not act collectively with the Soviet Union. [redacted]

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By the time of the WEU ministerial meeting in Rome, strident media attacks on the organization had become commonplace. Pravda published a scathing commentary on the meeting, accusing "die-hard Atlanticists" of feigning a campaign for Western European independence in order to neutralize anti-American feeling in Europe and counter the rise of the peace movement. The commentary attributed the effort to bolster the WEU to West Germany's "self-interested militarist ambitions." [redacted]

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### Soviet Motives

Political. The Soviet reaction to the European defense movement illustrates Moscow's perennial dilemma in weighing the costs and benefits of driving wedges between Washington and Western Europe. Moscow historically has searched for opportunities to exploit divergencies between the United States and Western Europe and frequently advocates greater Western European independence from Washington. At the same time, Moscow has long been wary of "Europeanist" alternatives to "Atlanticism." In the 1950s the Soviets vehemently opposed the creation of a European Defense Community (EDC)--a plan for West European military integration that was ultimately vetoed by the French--largely because of concern over West Germany's potential role in the organization. Moscow was similarly sour on the more successful European efforts to promote political and economic integration, again fearing that West Germany could emerge as the leader of a "third force" in international politics. [redacted]

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The possibility that a reduced US role in Europe could lead to an enlarged West German role may also have influenced Moscow's decision in the early 1970s to agree to multilateral negotiations on conventional force reductions in Europe. At the time, political pressure in the US Congress was mounting for a unilateral reduction of US troops in Western Europe. [redacted]

The WEU's revival evidently has again raised Soviet alarm over the potential role of West Germany. This concern has been fueled by the initial deployments of US intermediate-range nuclear missiles on West German soil and Bonn's aggressive pursuit of closer ties with East Germany. According to the US Embassy in Moscow, candidate Politburo member Boris Ponomarev and prominent Central Committee official Vadim Zagladin raised these concerns in July with visiting Social Democratic Party (SPD) arms control expert [redacted]

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Egon Bahr. Zagladin reportedly portrayed West Germany as leading the WEU revitalization effort and compared the effort to the EDC campaign of the 1950s. Referring to the WEU's June decision to lift remaining restrictions on West German arms production, he said that, although the military consequences of the move were not yet visible, Moscow was troubled by its "political" implications, an apparent reference to the likelihood of an enhanced West German role in Western European defense decisions. [ ]

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In the longer term, the Soviets apparently are worried that the incremental erosion of formal Western constraints on West German military power could give Bonn freer rein to pursue political ambitions. According to the US Embassy in Moscow, a group of Soviet European specialists told some visiting Americans in early August that they were very concerned about West Germany's military potential. They expressed fears that a reduced US involvement in European defense could unleash a host of problems for Moscow, including the possibility of German reunification and pressure on the unity of the Soviet Bloc. [ ]

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On the other hand, some Soviet spokesman have portrayed recent Western European defense cooperation efforts in a more favorable light, seeing potential opportunities to exploit US-Western European differences. For example, Izvestiya political observer Aleksandr Bovin, who has served as a Central Committee adviser and a leadership speechwriter, has at least twice publicly characterized European defense integration efforts as an "interesting" attempt by Western Europeans to assert their independence. On a domestic radio discussion program in early July, Bovin argued that Western Europeans were beginning to have doubts about the reliability of the US nuclear defense guarantee. His colleague on the program, Central Committee consultant Nikolay Shishlin, added that the WEU decision on West German arms production had produced "very mixed feelings" in the United States because of the potential challenge to the US weapons industry. [ ]

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Military. The Soviets have also voiced alarm at the possibility that Bonn might be given "dual key" access to French or US nuclear missiles or might participate in a new version of the aborted Multilateral Nuclear Force plan of the 1960s. A Pravda commentator this summer wrote, "It is obvious that some people in the FRG are scheming to get their hands on nuclear missiles through the 'crack' that could appear in the form of the WEU." In September, [ ]

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[ ] General Nikolay Chervov, a Soviet General Staff arms control spokesman, told a visiting West German SPD delegation that NATO's decision to place a West German general in charge

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of nuclear planning was evidence that Bonn was moving closer to acquiring nuclear weapons. [REDACTED]

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Apart from its long-range concerns about West Germany, Moscow is undoubtedly troubled by any development that enhances the fighting power of the West as a whole. Thus, to the extent that Western European defense cooperation fosters standardization of weaponry, efficient use of Alliance resources in armaments production, and coordinated defense planning, Moscow would naturally oppose it. More important, the Soviets would almost certainly be displeased by any development that strengthens Western Europe's commitment to increase defense spending and improve conventional weaponry. [REDACTED]

#### Possible Responses

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It is clear that, at present, Soviet authorities have decided that Western European defense integration does not serve Moscow's interests and wish to retard its further development. For now, Moscow seems content to limit its response to diplomatic and propaganda pressure. Moscow's stated intention to act independently to prevent a new German threat was probably meant to justify its unilateral protest to the West German Government and to generate uncertainty in Western capitals as to what further measures it might take in retaliation. [REDACTED]

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In the near term the Soviets are most likely to concentrate on exerting pressure against Bonn in hopes of reinforcing domestic opposition to the current government's security policies. In particular, Moscow could hope to appeal to the opposition SPD, which opposes US INF deployments and calls for the "denuclearization" of West Germany's defense. [REDACTED]

The Soviets will probably continue their harsh attacks on alleged West German militarism and revanchism in hopes of creating both internal and external pressures on Bonn to reconsider its more assertive policies. The tactic has already been used with some success to curb Bonn's aggressive pursuit of closer ties to East Germany. Beyond propaganda bluster, however, the Soviets are unlikely to take steps that would damage their own substantial political and economic equities in West Germany. [REDACTED]

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As for West Germany's allies, the Soviets have fewer levers to manipulate. Thus far, they have relied on propaganda and diplomacy to press Washington, London, and Paris to tighten Allied reins on Bonn. Indeed, General Secretary Chernenko raised the issue of alleged West German revanchism directly with visiting British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe in July

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and voiced concern that revitalizing the WEU could give Bonn access to nuclear weapons. By expressing such fears privately to the Allies, the Soviets may be trying to exploit lingering skepticism about the value and wisdom of refurbishing the organization. [redacted]

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In the longer term, the Soviets may be tempted to risk an escalation of East-West tensions if they perceive the West German role in Western European defense planning to be expanding significantly. This would be especially true if US-Soviet arms control negotiations fail to improve the broader East-West atmosphere. Moscow might then try to exploit West German vulnerabilities more aggressively, particularly in the sphere of intra-German relations and, possibly, Berlin. [redacted]

Moscow could eventually come to take a more benign view of European defense cooperation, however, if it proves to exacerbate differences within NATO and complicate the coordination of Allied defense planning. Those who appear to hold this view, such as Aleksandr Bovin, also have publicly voiced optimism that the shift to the right in Western European politics of recent years will eventually be reversed, bringing into power leftwing governments that will substantially modify security policies. These Soviets may hope that a more unified Western Europe could eventually work to Soviet advantage if its leaders are committed to detente and arms control, opposed to reliance on nuclear weapons for West European defense, and reluctant to raise spending levels for conventional defense. Meanwhile, the Soviets will undoubtedly continue to exploit opportunities for leverage with Western European opposition parties, especially the West German SPD, in hopes that they will hinder the implementation of current Western European security policies and eventually change them more to Moscow's liking. [redacted]

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